**The Goodbye Good Girl Project™ Presents**



**The Freedom Chronicle**

**Understanding – and Disposing of –**

**The “Good Girl” Rules!**

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**The Goodbye Good Girl Project™**

***The Freedom Chronicle***

“You keep concentrating on your issues and they will keep concentrating on you.”

*- Lori Kirstein*

“Make a new plan, Stan!”

*- Paul Simon*

***“Good Girls” Follow the Rules***

Do you like rules? Sometimes yes, sometimes no, right? Depends on the rules! If they help you move forward, or set you free, bring ‘em on!

Rules are useful for things like how to drive a car or how to interview successfully, but when it comes to laboring under rules that keep us doubting ourselves, feeling fearful of our natural right to speak up and be visible, well we can tend to wonder if we’ll ever be able to break free!

We can. I’m living proof. I was cemented into a “Good Girl” mode from childhood. The little girl who would get her praise from smiling, being gracious, bringing food and drinks to adults at her parents’ parties, it took a long while to understand where my strengths as a person – communication and interpersonal connection – differed from those “Good Girl” rules that kept me in a self-imposed subservient position!

This short list of “Good Girl” rules that I was saddled with will seem very familiar to you:

* Be good
* Be nice
* Make sure you are liked, and likeable
* Be physically attractive, or no one will like/love you
* Don’t be too visible
* Don’t expect too much of yourself
* Don’t be too opinionated
* Put others first

The fact is that women (and men too) are taught how to do things “right”. What we are not taught is how to BE! And we are certainly not taught how to be free, nor to connect emotionally. And emotion is not only a central human mode of being, it is something that women are both recognized and taken to task for.

***We are not taught to accept, admire and honor ourselves!***

***We are not taught to reach out to one another in our transparency,***

***our deep emotional truths, and our authenticity!***

***We are not taught to stand behind our own dreams!***

Without that kind of learning, we end up using a lot of energy fighting the ghosts of our fears, instead of engaging, honoring, and enjoying our strengths!

**We need to identify and begin using our natural strengths as women and as individuals.**

**We need to understand the Good Girl Rules so that we can see the “prison” we are in.**

**We need to calculate the impact of these rules so that we can choose to leave them behind.**

**We need to understand and start utilizing our modes of escape! *Together!***

**So let’s get to it!**

**Three “Good Girl” Rules, and Three “Good Girl Project” *Truths* To Set Us Free**

There’s nothing like fear, uncertainty, insecurity to make us stomp on our personal Stop Pedals. But we can hit that Go Pedal with passion, and move forward at greater speed when we feel self-confident, sure of what we know and who we are in our strengths.

No matter how much empowerment work you have done, there is always the possibility of some situation bringing up those dreaded thoughts of resistance or inability: “I don’t know *how!”*, or “I don’t have enough power / money / permission / approval to do this!”, or “I need more education/training/self-confidence before I try!”

We need tools to take back our permission and approval and give those precious commodities to ourselves.

**Good Girl Rule #1 – You can’t do it until you have permission, or approval**

***Good Girl Project™ Truth #1 – You have the power!***

A dear friend of mine gave me an incredible tool when I was buried under bad instruction from acting “teachers”, and could not access my own natural actor modes. I was home from the first semester, and showing him what I had learned; I was terrible, and both he and I could see it. The look on his face was a combination of horror and confusion! When I had finished my monologue, I stopped and just looked at him. He said, “What have they *done* to you?!”

I said, “I know. It’s awful. What do I do???” And he looked at me and simply said:

**“Well, how would *you* do it???”**

and I said, “Well, if it were up to *me*, I would do it *this* way,” and I did my monologue again, but *my* way, and it was fabulous.

Interesting, isn’t it? It was just him and me in that room, and *still* I had those teachers in my head, keeping me from doing it “my way”. All I had to do was say, “Well, *I* would do it *this* way…” and I found myself unstuck!

Years later, I found myself stuck once again with marketing advice – overwhelmed with too many modes of instruction as an entrepreneur – and that sentence came to mind. I jettisoned everything I’d been told and asked myself, “How would *I* do it?”, and I had a sassy and self-devised answer immediately!

**“How would *I* do it?” is a magic sentence!** **It gives you permission, immediately, to have your *own* answers!**

Sound too easy? That is actually the beauty of this phrase. Because of its simplicity and its emotional match-up with the frustration that your mind is already putting out, it acts rather like a flu shot, which as you know gives you the flu to stop the flu!

Try it. This sentence bypasses your mental chatter, and gives you a safe way to challenge that chatter without re-engaging it – at least long enough for a new answer to come! “Well!” you say to yourself, “if *I* did it, *I’d* do it like *this!*”

Try it the next time you feel stuck, or frozen in “analysis paralysis”, and see what happens.

And don’t feel foolish when you find out that talking to yourself in this particular way has great results. My philosophy is: If it works, go with it.

**Good Girl Rule #2 – Be Very, Very Unemotional**

***Good Girl Project™ Truth #2 – Emotion is Your Super Power!***

If you have ever heard that deeply judgmental sentence: “You’re too emotional!”, you will have felt the frustration, the shame, and the confusion that go with that accusation.

The truth is that the ability to feel, to express and share our feelings is a powerful part of the definition of being “human”. And yet we still have a cultural bias *toward* emotions that are deemed comfortable, appropriate, lighter, and *against* those that are called “darker”, like grief, dread, annoyance, shame, bitterness, depression and the like.

**What if emotion was, instead, actually your Super Power?**

Maybe that sounds crazy to you, or maybe you’re thinking well that sounds great, but how the heck does *that* get put into action in my life?!

Emotion, and particularly our ability to make choices of response and action as a result, and express them in so many different ways, are the elements that make us so beautifully human. As women in this culture, we have more permission than men do, to feel. And yet there are still so many shackles to remove!

We are not supposed to feel too much, are we? When we allow emotion to show, we run the risk of being labeled as bitchy or being dismissed as “too” emotional, a.k.a. untrustworthy. That is because we are living in a culture that has defined certain stances for women and for men, and we perceive those roles very, very well.

As “Good Girls”, we don’t question those roles. Rather, we find ways to live in alignment with them so that we won’t risk other “Good Girl” desires: to be accepted, approved of, liked. And sometimes we do it to keep our jobs, or to try to ward off emotional or physical abuse. As human beings, this dampening down of our natural and healthy emotional reactions is pain enough; as women, it is castration of a key element of our soul.

Sound dramatic?

Consider these things that we ***can not do*** without the flow and beauty of our emotions:

* **Start a business** – We need to feel deeply passionate about what we’re doing, or the effort that it takes to do this will feel impossible and we will tend to give up more easily.
* **Walk away from bad relationships** – We need to feel an unquestioned alignment with our own feelings. If we don’t, if we live in continuous self-doubt that what we feel has merit, we can find ourselves spending far more time than we want in relationships – from friendships to marriages to bosses – that suck us dry and give nothing in return.
* **Ask for help** – If we doubt our own pain, we tend not to ask for help, telling ourselves that we “should” be able to deal with it on our own. If we trust that when we feel overwhelmed, we actually *are* overwhelmed, then we have the permission we need to reach out.
* **Live our fullest lives** – Think of those people who are unique in their success, and for whom you have great respect. Did they get to be *who* and *what* they are by obeying the rules? By coloring inside the lines? By being well-behaved? No. They didn’t.

The phrase “Well-behaved women rarely make history” has made the rounds in Social Media. Those women who are not well-behaved…well, let’s just say that they are not polite about their emotions. They learn how to work with them, how to translate them, and also how to choose which of their own emotions to transform, which to share, and how to share them to maximum effect.

What no one tells us is that emotions are power, and how they are! And even if they did, we might not believe it, because we have learned to fear our strong emotions. Finding safe spaces, places and groups in which to explore and begin to understand and play with those emotions is key to making your emotions your Super Power.

**But how are emotions Super Powers?**

Consider this scenario:

You are interviewing for a job. You know who you are as a person – your integrity, your strengths, the situations in which you work best and in which you can’t work at all. Let’s say that you are someone who is warm and friendly and very talkative. You walk in to the interview, and you come face-to-face with someone who is very corporate, strict, unsmiling, and not a chatty person. What do you do? And what does emotion have to do with this scenario?

No one – not even interviewers – makes decisions based solely on facts. Emotions are always the deciding factor. A desire for safety. A desire to be admired. A desire to avoid pain. Desire, desire, desire. Which is an emotion.

So, when two people with similar abilities interview for the same position, which person gets it? If I said that I knew the ultimate answer to that one, I could be rich tomorrow, couldn’t I? But I can certainly tell you that it gets you big points to be the kind of person that speaks the “language” of the company, the job, the interviewer.

So, what if you *could* connect with this person on an emotional level? “Speak their language”[[1]](#footnote-1). Do you think that would make a difference in the outcome of the interview?

In my experience, it has absolutely done so. That emotional “connect” is not the only factor[[2]](#footnote-2), but it is certainly a powerful one.

This is how emotions are a Super Power in relation to others.

When it comes to emotions as Super Powers for our own selves, when we find those safe places to touch, accept, explore and make choices about what those feelings mean, we begin to walk into the mastery of self-awareness, choice, and emotional freedom.

And everyone would prefer the freedom to choose.

Now *that’s* what I call a Super Power! And it starts with the willingness to honor your emotions.

**Try this:**

Make a list of all the times you “had a feeling” that someone you knew was not your kind of person, but you didn’t pay attention to that feeling, and ended up in a bad friendship, or partnership.

Make a list of all the times you said, “I knew it!” but doubted what your instincts knew.

I’m not suggesting that you should make snap judgments from your feelings. Rather, I am suggesting that you begin to pay attention to what you feel, because as you stop long enough to honor those feelings, you will then be able to respond to other needs that you have bypassed for so long:

* To ask questions about a person or situation, before you jump into relationship with them.
* To question *where* in fact, that feeling is coming from? Is it from that person’s actions, or is it from something you are perceiving about that person emotionally? Is it something that is coming from your own past experience with a similar type?
* To have the opportunity to really commune with yourself. When is the last time you did that?

Your emotions are speaking to you! You honor yourself by listening!

**Good Girl Rule #3 – Be Nice!**

***Good Girl Project™ Truth #3 – Don’t Be “Nice”; Be Kind!***

“Nice” seems to be our version of the Star Trek Prime Directive. The one rule that we are never, ever to break. The one rule that is paramount. *“Be nice.”*

When boys are raised, they are not told to be “nice” as much as they are told to “be a man”. Boys’ macho identity troubles are as shackling for them as “nice” is for us girls!

“Nice” becomes the identity of many, many “Good Girls”, and the oddest and truest thing is that we already *are* “nice”. How many women do you know (and are you one, yourself?) who try so very hard to “be nice”, while they already are? Other “Good Girl” personality types get so upset with being “nice” that they come on strong enough to not seem “too nice”. But it doesn’t really work.

So, what is the cost of being “nice”?

1. It stunts your efforts in life. It stunts your ability to recognize, care for and deeply support your own journey.
2. You tend to put yourself last, and to give to yourself last, if at all.
3. You become very, very good at punishing yourself for not measuring up to this ideal behavior of being “nice” to people, when you are protecting or standing up for yourself.
4. You deny that – or unable to see or admit – that you already *are* a nice, agreeable, cool, amazing, marvelous person.
5. You then set out on a fruitless quest to pile appropriate and learned behaviors on your actions, words and thoughts in order to *prove* that someday, somehow, you could be the nicest girl in the whoooooole world.
6. You feel miserable because you can never quite “get there”…OR…
7. You feel miserable because you have become super nice, but not much else, and now you feel the frustration of not being all of who you are!

Consider this distinction, which may very well rescue you from giving in to putting everyone else first:

**Being nice is very different from being kind!**

When you are kind, there is room for other crucial aspects of your life, like:

* Telling the truth
* Making unpopular choices
* Honoring yourself
* Honoring others
* Delivering unpleasant news
* Putting yourself first (don’t be afraid; that doesn’t mean you *always* put yourself first)

Doesn’t that sound a whole lot better, a whole lot more effective, a whole lot more freeing than having only one “nice” note to play on?

Try this exercise: Take one situation in which you were nice, and found that the situation absolutely did not turn out well for you, and write down how that situation may have been different if you were *kind* instead.

And if you are having trouble with the difference between “nice” and “kind”, here is my definition:

“Nice” is when I make the other person’s comfort around what I’m saying, far more important than what I actually need to say to them.

“Kind” is when I stand in my courage and strength of saying what I need to say, and I make sure that I say it with as little (or no) judgment, blame, shame, or cruelty as possible.

**Feel better?**

When we do things that challenge our own status quo, the freedom and the oxygen of that experience can literally take our breath away! Once we get used to that kind of experience, it becomes reassuringly familiar, and exciting!

The Good Girl wants *certainty and security* from rules and external proofs. But you’re not a Good Girl, are you - you’re a Badass in the making!

***The Badass Girl is looking for the kind of certainty that comes from her own healed experience, and uses the external proofs to enjoy her mastery,***

***and her fun in the world she has molded.***

You can do it. You can practice it. You can reflect on it. You can make your own choices about who you want to be, and how you want to be that!

If you want support in that, there is support to be had. The work goes on…it’s just a far more enjoyable work than we ever practiced before, as Good Girls. But we’re done with slavishly doing that game, aren’t we…? Yeah. We are.

From me to you ~

Love and Moxie!

Lori



For you: A complimentary 30-minute Self-Expression Check-Up to determine one of your primary emotional hold-backs, and one of your primary emotional strengths to overcome it! Write to me at **support@GoodbyeGoodGirl.com**.

1. This is Emotional Linguistics™, a term and practice that I created to identify practices that bring greater mastery and flexibility to interpersonal communication. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Self-confidence is another powerful factor, and it comes, actually, from practicing it before you even think you have enough of it to work with! (This is why I love to lead experiential workshops – there is no replacement for experiencing that power that you thought you didn’t have! It’s good to surprise yourself. ☺ ) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)